

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY

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Abstract

Leadership style of school principals is considered an influential factor in teachers' self-efficacy. However, very few studies have explored the relationship between the transformational and transactional leadership style of school principals and self-efficacy of teachers. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their perceptions of leaders/principals' behaviour, with a special focus on the transactional and transformational leadership practices. Quantitative research design employing a stratified random sampling was used for this study. A total of (n= 357) teachers were surveyed, using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and Bandura's Instrument for self-efficacy. The strongest correlation was noticed between Idealized influence and self-efficacy for climate in schools ($r = .377, p < .001$), while Individual Consideration was found to be the strongest predictor of self-efficacy for teaching $F(1,355) = .363, p < .000$ with an R^2 of .132. All four attributes of transformational leadership and two attributes of transactional leadership (contingent reward and active management by exception) were significantly associated with attributes of self-efficacy, whereas passive management by exception was the only leadership trait that was correlated negatively with self-efficacy. Results could point to contextual and cultural explanations regarding the perception of authority and leadership. Further work is needed to provide a better understanding of the relationship between attributes of transformational and transactional leadership and self-efficacy. The study provides practical implications that can be used in educational settings.

Keywords: Leadership, transformational, transactional, self-efficacy, teaching

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1. Introduction

What teachers bring into the classroom is considered to dictate the quality of their students' educational experiences (Nelson, 2008) and the overall school and student performance; since it predicts expectations that one might have towards a process (Ross & Gray, 2006). One of the most effective attributes of teachers' performance has been documented to be their sense of efficacy (Alvarez-Nunez, 2012), also referred to as their "belief on their capability to organize and execute courses of action, required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in particular context" (Tschannen-Moran, Wolf-folk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998, p. 233, as cited in Chen & Yeung, 2015).

Within the last decade, there has been an increasing interest in the self-efficacy of teachers, in considering it an invaluable attribute to their motivation to work as well (Roeser, Arbreton, & Anderman, 1993, as cited in Ross & Gray, 2006). A high level of self-efficacy for teachers is considered to be a motivational factor at work, making them achieve the success they aspire to, overcoming the obstacles that might arise, as well as trying harder to work with their students and seek new strategies that can provide successful outcomes (Ross & Gray, 2006, p. 194).

However, the amount of effort teachers make, their devotion to their school activities, their motivation to work, and job satisfaction, have been documented to be influenced by certain factors. Teachers' preferences in the subject – related learning and or professional development, their students' academic achievement, teachers' relationship with other people within the school setting and positive relationship with parents (Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2007; 2010) are considered some of the influential factors. Furthermore, numerous researchers have emphasized school administrators' support in providing teachers access to resources, promoting attendance and ongoing encouragement, as crucial to the latter's self-efficacy (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Ramey-Gassert, et al., 1996, as cited in Chen, Yeung, 2015).

Furthermore, overwhelming evidence reveals how school administrators' educational leadership style influence teachers' behaviour and beliefs towards themselves. According to existing findings that consider the leadership influence on its employees, there are various definitions of leadership and leaders' behaviours, which do have an impact on their employees. Leaders who adopt both transformational and transactional leadership practices are the most influential leaders (Bass, 1985). A transformational leadership style is a change-oriented style of leadership, and as such, is composed of individual consideration, inspirational motivation, idealized influence and intellectual stimulation (Derue, Nahrgan, Wellman, & Humphrey 2011, p. 15). On the other hand, a transactional leadership style in its core has the elements of

transaction, between the leader and the follower and as such, involves clarification of roles and requirements that are expected by followers (p. 16).

Transactional leadership, whose primary behaviors are grouped into contingent reward, active management by exception and passive management by exception, based on Bass' (1985) evidence. Contingent reward as a method of transactional leadership, entails clarification of roles and requirements from leaders to followers, and at the same time offers rewards contingent to the completion of obligations (p. 757). However, a more problematic and not so effective method of transactional leadership is management by exception, which indicates that intervention from the leader, should come, only when things go wrong (Derue et. al., 2011, p.16). With regard to transformational leadership, (Bass, 1999) and its components comprising idealized influence attributes, idealized influence behaviors, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration and inspirational motivation are usually seen as characteristics through which a leader is able to present a clear vision, in an articulated way and serve as a role model for his followers, towards upcoming processes (p. 756). Thus, leaders with such traits, stimulate the followers, to be identified with this type of a leader, and be inspirationally motivated (p. 756).

2. Problem Statement

The importance of leadership style in determining the self-efficacy of teachers is not only crucial to a conducive institutional climate and management; it is also crucial for teachers' outcomes and their performance. Self-efficacy is considered a context-specific and multidimensional construct (Zimmerman & Clearly, 2006, p. 47). Self-efficacy of teachers is a crucial determinant of their aims and behavior. Additionally, the social environment has a considerable impact in perceived self-efficacy (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007, p. 612)

Evidence based research demonstrates a positive relationship between transformational leadership and school environment, teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, development of an innovative climate in schools and students' achievements (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006; Sun & Leithwood, 2012).

On the other hand, transactional leadership practices are less likely to be positively correlated with teachers' self-efficacy (Hipp, 1996; Nir & Krano, 2006; Walker & Slear, 2011). A study conducted by Walker & Slear (2011) concluded that contingent reward, in particular, was negatively correlated with teachers' self-efficacy (p. 52).

The impact of the relationship, between leadership and teachers' self-efficacy, echoes in the overall development of a strong school culture. Leithwood (1993) suggests that intellectual stimulation and individual consideration towards organizational members are

attributes of transformational leadership that highly influence the development of a strong school climate (p. 26).

Similar to other developing countries, in the past years, Kosovo has been facing difficulties in reforming the education system and enhancing student learning. Moreover, while many changes occur daily, education in practice is facing obstacles arising from the 'new', the 'unknown', and most importantly, the uncertainty of the results that come from the implementation of new approaches and methodologies.

Walker and Epp (2010) identified challenges faced by international agencies and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in implementing reforms in teacher training in Kosovo, many of which were context specific. According to these findings, it is crucial to understand the level of support and opposition among key stakeholders when planning to implement and introduce a reform, as although, teachers in Kosovo undergo many trainings, seminars and workshops, their performance leaves much to be desired and much room for improvement (p. 119).

According to another study, conducted by Gjoshi and Kume (2014) on the importance of managerial capacities of school directors in leading the school effectively, interaction between teachers, pupils, parents and local government is valued as crucial in order to institute any educational reform in Kosovo (Gjoshi & Kume, 2014, p. 30). The same authors also point out that students' success is linked with the effectiveness of leadership skills, which also impact the self-efficacy of teachers. Furthermore, the school environment and quality of learning, according to their research, influences Kosovar students' wellbeing (p. 342).

3. Research Hypothesis

In order to provide a better understanding of the relationship between transformational and transactional leadership practices and individual self-efficacy of teachers, based on the existing respective literature, the following hypothesis were derived:

H1: Transformational leadership attributes are positively correlated with teachers' self-efficacy.

H2: There is a negative correlation between transactional leadership attributes and teachers' self-efficacy.

H3: Transformational leadership style is a predictor of teachers' self-efficacy.

4. Research Methods

A quantitative research design was used for this research. The total number of participants were 357 full time teachers of elementary schools, middle schools and secondary public schools in Prishtina. From the total sample, 218, or 61.1% were female, with teaching experience ranging from 1- 45 years.

4.1. Sampling

For this study, a stratified random sampling was used. The type of school defined three strata's samplings: elementary schools, middle schools and secondary schools. Each stratum was divided into 2 groups: schools with larger number of student body and schools that had a lower number of students. Accordingly, randomly assigned schools from each group; every third school on the list was selected to be part of the study. Data were collected in two turns; in the morning and in the afternoon, as per schools' schedule.

Participants were recruited during their regular school classes, informed of the purpose of the study and time demands. They were further informed that their responses would remain confidential and that their participation may be revoked at any time. Data were collected during the month of December 2016. Time to complete the survey was approximately 30-35 minutes. The survey was distributed to all teachers at the selected schools who, after being informed for the study goal and time demands, volunteered to be part of the study.

4.2. Procedures & Ethical Consideration

Prior to the data collection process, formal permission from the Directorate of Education in the Municipality of Prishtina was obtained. Third year students of the Department of Psychology, University of Prishtina, who were trained for data collection procedure, collected the data. It must be noted here that this paper is part of a more extensive research, where parents, elementary and high school students were also interviewed.

4.3. Measures

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), developed by Avolio and Bass (2002), was used to measure teachers' perception of their school principal and their leadership style. The instrument measures fit with the variables of the study. The questionnaire comprised a total 45 items measuring transformational leadership, transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership style.

A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) was used. Observed reliability for the current sample was in the good range ($\alpha = .93$). Reliabilities for

the transformational and transactional leadership results with Cronbach's Alpha were $\alpha = .90$ and $\alpha = .71$ respectively. Questions like: "Displays a sense of power and confidence" were used to measure Idealized Influence (attitude), whereas Idealized Influence (behaviors) was measured with questions like: "Talks about his/her most important values and beliefs". Some sample questions for inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration were: "Talks optimistically about the future", "Re-examines critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate", and "Spends time teaching and coaching" respectively.

Teachers' Self-Efficacy was measured using the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale, developed by Bandura (1986). This scale consisted of six sub-scales: self-efficacy in decision making; teaching self-efficacy; self-efficacy for discipline; self-efficacy for parental involvement; self-efficacy for community involvement and self-efficacy for positive climate in school. A 9 point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (nothing) to 9 (a great deal) was used.

Observed reliability for the current sample was satisfactory, resulting in $\alpha = .95$ self-efficacy scale. Furthermore, reliability for each sub scale, was in the good range as well, resulting in: self-efficacy in decision-making. ($\alpha = .95$); teaching self-efficacy ($\alpha = .99$); self-efficacy for discipline ($\alpha = .99$); self-Efficacy for parental involvement ($\alpha = .99$); self-efficacy for community involvement ($\alpha = .99$) and self-efficacy for positive climate in school ($\alpha = .99$).

4.4. Data Analysis

Results were analysed using SPSS Software, version 22. To analyze the results, the questionnaires were entered into the database of the SPSS software. After data cleaning, statistical analyses were made. The analyses, used to test the hypothesis, include frequencies and percentages, correlations to measure the relationship between two variables, Cronbach's alpha as a coefficient of reliability and linear regression.

5. Findings

Table 1 below presents the descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) for sub scales of self-efficacy, transformational leadership and transactional leadership.

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviations of Variables

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self Efficacy Decision Making	357	1.00	9.00	6.1681	2.09260
Self Efficacy for Teaching	357	1.44	9.00	6.8441	1.41830
Self Efficacy for Discipline	357	1.67	9.00	7.3445	1.65385

Self Efficacy for Parental Involvement	357	1.67	9.00	6.8908	1.74700
Self Efficacy for Community Involvement	357	1.00	9.00	5.4024	2.13384
Self Efficacy for Climate in School	357	1.44	9.00	7.1226	1.52365
Idealized Influence	357	.63	4.00	2.8505	.66416
Inspirational Motivation	357	.25	4.00	2.8929	.72300
Intellectual Stimulation	357	.00	4.00	2.6926	.85019
Individual Consideration	357	.25	4.00	2.3810	.88220
Contingent Reward	357	.50	4.00	2.9125	.78670
Mgmt by Exception A	357	.50	4.00	2.5616	.86687
Mgmt by Exception P	357	.00	4.00	1.8676	.78867
Valid N (listwise)	357				

The first hypothesis suggests that transformational leadership attributes are positively correlated with teachers' self-efficacy. Results from the correlational analysis support and confirm the second hypothesis with the following result.

Transformational leadership is significantly correlated with teachers' self-efficacy, with a medium positive correlation of ($r=.466$, $p<.001$), (see Table 2 below).

Table 2. Correlation analysis between transformational leadership and teachers' self-efficacy

		Teachers' Self-Efficacy	Transformational Leadership
Teachers' Self-Efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	357	
Transformational Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.446**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	357	357

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3. Correlational analysis between Idealized Influence and subscales of teachers’ self - efficacy

		Idealized Influence	Self-efficacy for positive climate in school	Teaching Self-Efficacy	Self-Efficacy for discipline	Self-Efficacy for Parental Involvement	Self-Efficacy for community involvement
Idealized Influence	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	357					
Self-efficacy for positive climate in school	Pearson Correlation	.377**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
	N	357	357				
Teaching Self-Efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.339**	.664**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
	N	357	357	357			
Self-Efficacy for discipline	Pearson Correlation	.300**	.638**	.786**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
	N	357	357	357	357		
Self-Efficacy for Parental Involvement	Pearson Correlation	.303**	.670**	.718**	.674**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		
	N	357	357	357	357	357	
Self-Efficacy for community involvement	Pearson Correlation	.126*	.527**	.513**	.471**	.653**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	357	357	357	357	357	357

Notes: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

A more detailed analysis was conducted between attributes of transformational leadership and sub-scales of teachers’ self-efficacy, is presented in Table 3 above. All four attributes of transformational leadership and two attributes of transactional leadership, significantly correlated with teachers’ self-efficacy. The strongest correlation was noticed between Idealized influence and self-efficacy for climate in schools ($r = .377, p < .001$).

The second hypothesis predicted that there would be a negative correlation between transactional leadership attributes and teachers’ self-efficacy. As presented in Table 4 below, transactional leadership attributes: contingent reward is significantly correlated with teachers’ self-efficacy, ($r = .378, p < .001$). Whereas, the transactional leadership attribute, management

by exception passive, does not have any significant correlation with teachers' self-efficacy. Thus, the second hypothesis is partially proved.

Table 4. Correlational analysis between Teachers' Self-Efficacy and attributes of transactional leadership

		Teachers' Self-Efficacy	Contingent Reward	Management by exception Passive
Teachers' Self-Efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	357		
Contingent Reward	Pearson Correlation	.378**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	357	357	
Management by exception Passive	Pearson Correlation	.062	.075	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.242	.158	
	N	357	357	357

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the research findings, the transformational leadership style is a predictor of teachers' self-efficacy. Regression analysis confirmed the third study hypothesis with the following results: Transformational leadership style is a predictor of teachers' self-efficacy $F(1,355) = 446, p < .000$ with an R^2 of .199, (see Table 5 below).

Table 5. Results of linear regression for teachers' self-efficacy

Variable	B	SE(B)	B	R ²	R ² adj.
TF Leadership	1.34	.14	.446***	.199	.197

Notes: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

In order to better understand the relationship between self-efficacy and transformational leadership, linear regression analysis was employed between every sub-scale of transformational leadership and sub-scales of self-efficacy. The analysis yields the following results. The strongest predictor of teachers' self-efficacy is the transformational leadership attribute of Intellectual Stimulation $F(1,355) = .409, p < .000$ with an R^2 of .167, (see Table 6 below).

Table 6. Results of linear regression for teachers' self-efficacy

Variable	B	SE(B)	B	R ²	R ² adj.
Intellectual Stimulation	4.85	.57	.409***	.167	.165

Notes: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Furthermore, according to the research findings, Individual Consideration as a transformational leadership attribute was found to be the strongest predictor of self-efficacy for teaching $F(1,355) = .363, p<.000$ with an R^2 of .132 (see Table 7 below).

Table 7. Results of linear regression for teachers' self-efficacy for teaching

Variable	B	SE(B)	B	R ²	R ² adj.
Individual Consideration	1.31	.17	.363***	.132	.129

Note *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

6. Conclusions and Implications

The research findings confirm that the transformational leadership style and its attributes of intellectual stimulation and individual consideration are the strongest predictors of teachers' self-efficacy. These findings are in line with the other studies conducted within the field, through which, the transformational leadership style proves to be correlated and to predict teachers' self-efficacy (Hipp, 1996; Nir & Krano, 2006; Walker & Slear, 2011; Kurt, Duyar, & Çalik, 2011).

Other transformational leadership attributes (idealized influence, individual consideration and inspirational motivation) were found to be significantly associated with the attributes of self-efficacy. This does not come as a surprise. What was surprising, however, was that the same association was noticed with transactional leadership attributes of contingent reward and active management by exception, which were found to be positively correlated with the self-efficacy of teachers. These findings differ markedly from previous research conducted within the field. Numerous studies have confirmed that principals with transactional leadership style are less likely to have teachers with high self-efficacy in their schools (Hipp, 1996; Hipp & Bredeson, 1995; Mascal, 2003).

These surprising results might be attributed to specificities of country context and culture. Both concepts, leadership and perceived self-efficacy, are strongly influenced by cultural context and other environmental factors. According to House, Javidan, Hanges, & Dorfman (2002), culturally sensitive practices predict leader and follower attributes and

behaviors, which circumscribe the acceptable and effective practices within the particular organization.

This is a pioneer research in Kosovo; therefore, more needs to be done to better understand its findings and explore newly opened paths for further research. The research desideratum from this study involves the variable of role modeling within the perception of leadership figure.

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